90 The passive

A number of verbs are commonly used in the passive, especially in certain contexts (see the spotlight).

The man **is said to be** carrying a weapon.
The boat **is reported** to be a mile from shore.
The teenager **is known as** a troublemaker.
She **is known for** her work as a therapist.
They **were meant** to stay together.
The meeting **is scheduled** for next week.
Four **have been short-listed** for the prize.
Residents **are empowered** by the new law.
The body will **be cremated**, not buried.
The man **has been jailed** for the robbery.
I **was overcome with** grief.
Two girls **have been suspended from** school.
We **were caught up in** a traffic jam.

GLOSSARY

be known as sth/sb OR **for sth**	have a reputation as sth/sb or for sth
be meant (for sth / to do sth)	be intended for sth / to do sth
be scheduled (for sth)	be arranged to happen at a particular time
be short-listed (for sth)	be part of a small list for a prize, award, etc, chosen from all the people who applied for it. The winner is sb from that list.
be empowered (to do sth) *formal*	have or be given the power or authority to do sth SYN **be authorized (to do sth)**
be cremated	(of a dead body) be burnt, especially as part of a funeral ceremony
be jailed	be sent to prison
be overcome (with sth)	be strongly affected by sth, especially sth emotional
be suspended sb (from sth)	be officially stopped from doing your job, going to school, etc.
be caught up (in sth)	be involved in sth, especially when you do not want to be

SPOTLIGHT using passives

The use of the passive is more impersonal and commonly found in news reports, etc, where these passive phrases are common.

- *The minister **is said to be** considering resignation.*
- *Food supplies **are reported to be** arriving in the country.*

1 Complete the sentences with a suitable verb.

1 The helicopter carrying the prince is _____ to be nearing the country.
2 Most of the survivors were _____ with emotion when they greeted their families.
3 The civil servants were _____ for giving secret information to journalists.
4 When I die, I want to be _____, not buried.
5 The courts are _____ to give longer prison sentences if they wish.
6 She is _____ as a rather difficult boss.
7 The meeting is not _____ to start until 2 p.m.
8 Sorry I'm late. I was _____ in the debate about education and couldn't leave.

2 Rewrite the sentences in the passive, using a suitable verb from the top of the page.

1 People tell me he is dangerous. He is _____.
2 The judge sent him to prison for five years. He was _____.
3 They're going to put the film on at 9.00 p.m. The film is _____.
4 They considered four people from the nominations. Four people were _____.
5 We spent ages in a traffic jam. We were _____.
6 The school told the girls to leave. The girls were _____.
7 People know her because of her charity work. She is _____.
8 It wasn't my plan to join the army. I wasn't _____.
9 He was very emotional when he saw her. He was _____.

3 Other verbs, taught elsewhere in the book, are also commonly used in the passive. Use the Word List if you don't know these verbs or can't remember what they mean.

be charged (with sth) be entitled to sth be surrounded (by sth) be accused of sth
be wounded be stranded be convicted (of sth) be trapped



LIVEWORKSHEETS